

# Thomas Lanners

## *pianist*

Thomas Lanners has appeared as a solo and collaborative pianist and clinician throughout the U.S. and abroad, presenting his New York solo debut in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in 2004. His performances have been broadcast nationally and internationally on programs such as American Public Media's *Performance Today*, BBC3 in London and RTÉ Radio 1's Sunday Miscellany in Ireland, among many others. Designated the 2014 Distinguished Music Teacher by the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association and inducted into the Steinway & Sons Teacher Hall of Fame in 2021, he currently serves as Professor of Piano at Oklahoma State University.

Thomas has performed, presented master classes, and given lectures on various musical topics as a guest artist throughout the United States, in Mexico, Canada, Europe and Asia. He has presented three sessions as a featured guest at the Shanghai Conservatory International Piano Pedagogy Conference since 2019, and the online version of the Conference in 2021 boasted 850,000 registrants across China. In the summer of 2018, he served on the faculties of the Shanghai International Piano Festival and Institute and the Conero and AmiCaFest Piano Festivals in Italy. Within the past five years, he's presented master classes at Rice University, the University of Washington, at Yonsei University in Seoul, in China at the Sichuan, Shanghai and Zhejiang Conservatories, the Shanghai Conservatory Middle School, and East China and Beijing Normal Universities, and in Mexico at the Unidad Académica de Artes de la Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas. Lanners gave a master class and recital to conclude Beijing Normal University's 2015 International Music Week. Thomas served as a performer, teacher and adjudicator at the Lee University International Piano Festival and Competition in Tennessee in 2021, having also been one of the three guest artists in 2012. He gave a master class on the NYU Steinhardt School of Music's *Piano Artist Master Class Series* in 2012 as well.

Institutions he has visited as a guest artist include the Eastman School of Music, the Universities of Texas-Austin, Colorado-Boulder, North Texas, Miami (FL), South Carolina, Oklahoma, Western Ontario (Canada), Iowa, and Missouri-Columbia; Northwestern, Syracuse, Louisiana State, Southern Methodist, George Mason and Baylor Universities; and the Lawrence University Conservatory of Music in Wisconsin. In addition, Lanners has played solo recitals in Brussels and Gent, Belgium, performed on the Classical Mondays recital series in Preston Bradley Hall at the Chicago Cultural Center, at the OK Mozart International Festival, the Tulsa Performing Arts Center, and in Bangkok and Hua-Hin, Thailand.

Thomas' CD, *Ned Rorem: The Three Piano Sonatas*, was released worldwide by Centaur Records. Links to three tracks on the recording were included in Sunday *New York Times* articles in 2018 and 2022, on the occasion of Rorem's 95th birthday and then as a tribute soon after his death. Mark Lehman, in an *American Record Guide* review, wrote of the Sonatas disc: "It's especially pleasing to have all three of Rorem's sonatas on one disc, superbly played by Thomas Lanners, and in clear, vivid sound. ... Anyone who cares about mainstream 20th Century piano music should seek out this superlative recording." In a review of his 2005 release, *Touches of Bernstein: The Complete Published Piano Music of Leonard Bernstein*, critic Jed Distler wrote

for *ClassicsToday.com*: "Thomas Lanners totally understands this music, pointing up the jazzy qualities to idiomatic perfection as well as projecting Bernstein's lyrical generosity without milking it ... All told, Lanners' loving mastery easily holds its own in any company. Warmly recommended."

Lanners' recording, *Ned Rorem: Piano Works, Volume 2*, was also released internationally on the Centaur label. The disc received much critical praise, including the following from critic Donald Rosenberg's review in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*: "The piano pieces on this fine recording attest to Rorem's penchant for lyrical and dramatic contrast. ... Thomas Lanners brings exceptional detail and urgency to the repertoire, taking as much care with inner voices as he does with arching statements. Grade: A." Robert Schulslaper wrote, in a *Fanfare* magazine review of both Rorem volumes: "Lanners plays [all the virtuoso pieces] to the hilt ... and he's also a sensitive musician who communicates the essence of Rorem's varied moods."

Thomas was awarded a grant in 2010, through the Centaur label, from the Aaron Copland Fund for Music Recording to record works of Pulitzer winner Ross Lee Finney, having also received a Copland grant for his first Rorem CD. His championing of American piano music was the topic of an interview article, titled "Pianist Thomas Lanners: Spreading the Good Word," in a 2010 issue of *Fanfare*.

Always in demand as a clinician, he has presented five sessions at Music Teachers National Association conferences, and was featured in a Pedagogy Saturday panel session for the 2020 MTNA Virtual Conference. He served as the monthly MTNA Webinar clinician in February 2020. Thomas has also presented at the 2019, 2015, 2010, 2008, and 2000 Oklahoma Music Teachers Association conferences, conferences of the Texas MTA (2016 and 2012) and the College Music Society's South Central Chapter. Lanners gave a lecture, for the ninth consecutive year, for the 2022 MusicEdConnect.com National Conference, a three-day online event in February that includes sessions from numerous respected piano pedagogues. He gave a lecture as one of three featured guests during the inaugural International Conference on Education, Culture and Arts (Congreso Internacional de Educación, Cultura y Artes) in Zacatecas, Mexico, and presented sessions at Eastman's Summer Chamber Music Institute.

In the realm of collaborative piano, he has performed with Walfrid Kujala, former Northwestern University professor of flute and Chicago Symphony member, Richard MacDowell, professor of clarinet at the University of Texas at Austin, and Nancy Ambrose King, professor of oboe at the University of Michigan. He also collaborated with Leone Buyse, professor of flute at Rice University and former Principal Flutist, Boston Symphony Orchestra and Boston Pops.

He is an active writer on musical topics, with several feature articles, reviews and column contributions having been published in *American Music Teacher*, MTNA's refereed journal, most recently in 2023. His writing has also been published in *Clavier* and *Canadian Music Teacher*, among others.

Lanners served as one of three jurors for the final round of the MTNA Stecher and Horowitz Two Piano Competition at the national conference in 2019. He also served as a juror for the 5th Mozart International Piano Competition in Bangkok, Thailand in 2015, and for the inaugural Kuleshov International Piano Competition in 2016. Thomas has adjudicated at MTNA's West Central, South Central and Southern Division piano competitions, the Eastman School's International Piano Competition for High School Students, and for numerous other competitions across the U.S. In 2020 he judged two online competitions, the #StayHome International Piano Competition (with 10 judges from across Europe and the U.S.) and the Linda Bustani International Online Piano Competition, which was based in Brazil.

One of Dr. Lanners' former OSU students, Chul Hyung (Tony) Cho, joined the faculty of the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music in 2015 as an opera coach. Tony previously worked at the Juilliard School as an Associate Opera Coach, then coached operas at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music and at Chapman University outside Los Angeles. Former student Christopher Reed recently completed the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Collaborative Piano at the Eastman School, having earned his Master's degree there as well. Other students have been accepted into graduate piano performance degree programs at Eastman, the Universities of Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Southern California, Washington, Kansas, Missouri-Kansas City, the Manhattan and Mannes Schools of Music, and the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. They have had success in numerous competitions, winning Oklahoma Music Teachers Association Collegiate competitions (including 14 first place winners and numerous runners-up), 6 state winners in the MTNA Senior Artist competitions, 2 MTNA Young Artist winners (plus a national finalist in the String Chamber Music category in 2013), and 2 MTNA Junior winners. His students were named Alternate (Second Place) for the South Central Division three times since 2017. Four of his students have won the OSU Symphony Orchestra's annual Concerto Competition in the past two years alone.

Lanners was the 2021 recipient of the Wise-Diggs-Berry Endowed Award for excellence in the visual, performance or written arts at OSU, and a 2022 recipient of the OSU Regents Distinguished Research Award, presented each year to one arts and humanities faculty member at the university.

Thomas received his Master's and Doctoral degrees in Piano Performance and Literature from the Eastman School as a student of Barry Snyder. He earned his Bachelor of Music degree summa cum laude as a student of Leonidas Lipovetsky at Florida State University, where he won the Brautlecht Award as the School's Outstanding Rising Senior. He also studied under John Perry at the Aspen Music Festival and Jerome Lowenthal at the Music Academy of the West, and has performed in master classes for such renowned artists as Pascal Devoyon, Jeffrey Kahane, Dominique Merlet, Anton Nel, Cécile Ousset, and Nelita True.